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A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

M e d i c a l O f f i c e r o f H e a l t h

for the Year

1 9 4 8 .

J. G. PALEY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health,
Assistant School Medical Officer.

15th September, 1949.



Council Offices,
"WOODLEIGH",
Barnard Castle.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I beg to present my Annual Report for the year, 1948.

There was a further fall in the number of live births during the year. This corresponds with a similar trend throughout the country. It is satisfactory to note that in spite of an increase in the estimated population of the town, there was again a decrease in the total number of deaths (sixty-five compared with seventy-two in 1947 and seventy-seven in 1946).

Local Industries.- These are mainly concerned with agriculture, but the factory operated by Messrs. Glaxo Laboratories, Ltd. in Harmire Road, for the production of Penicillin, now affords employment for a large number of persons resident in the Urban and Rural Districts. The total number of persons employed at this factory at the end of the year was 688 persons.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.- The combined yield of the springs and the surplus water from the Royal Air Force Borehole maintained a good supply of water throughout the year. It was necessary to curtail the supply of water at night during part of July and August. The analysis of the water was satisfactory.

Negotiations for the sinking of a new borehole near Mount Pleasant Reservoir are proceeding, and if the anticipated yield is realized, it should be sufficient to overcome present shortage and provide good reserves for future development.

Rivers and Streams.- There was evidence during the year that occasional pollution of Percy Beck was occurring. This stream takes the surface water drainage of the Penicillin Factory, and at a previous inspection, an odour was noticed similar to that at the factory. Several improvements were carried out to prevent any accidental discharges reaching the surface water drains and experiments were also conducted at the fermenting plant with the same purpose in view.

Refuse Tip.- The present refuse tip is well removed from the town and nearest dwelling-house. The tip has been levelled and the parts not in use for tipping are being covered with a layer of earth and sown with grass seed.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.- The Sewage Disposal Works continue to work satisfactorily and no complaint has been received from official or other quarters.

A scheme has been prepared jointly by the Council's Consulting Engineers and Messrs. Glaxo Laboratories' Engineers in conjunction with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Ministry of Health for the alteration of the Sewage Disposal Works, with a view to experimental treatment of the effluent from the Penicillin Factory.

Closet Accommodation.- Twenty-one pail closets remain in the area. Most of these are in old properties already confirmed by the Ministry of Health for clearance.

Five privies remain the same. These are on outlying farms and cannot, at the present time, be connected to the sewers.

Housing. - Thirty-six Council and two private houses were completed and occupied during the year.

Included in the above total were eight key workers houses completed and occupied in Victoria Road.

Contracts have been let for twenty-six houses on the Station Road Housing Site and work commenced in December on the erection of the houses.

The site will eventually accommodate one hundred and two houses, of which twelve are four bedroomed, eighty-two three bedroomed and eight Aged Persons Dwellings.

Additional land is to be purchased in Victoria Road and Green Lane for a further one hundred and fifty houses.

I must again stress the urgent need for new houses. There are many families living in insanitary and overcrowded conditions in the town and the advent of the Penicillin Factory, employing a large number of workers, has aggravated the position.

The most recent summary of live applications for Council houses shows there are still 325 applications unsatisfied and of these, one hundred and fifty-two families are without separate homes. At the present rate of building, it will be many years before the demand can be met.

Factories and Workshops - Factories Act, 1937 - Part I.-

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	No. on Register	Inspections	Written Notices
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	43	10	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	31	11	1
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	4	10	-
Total	78	31	1

Cases in which Defects were found:

Particulars	Number Found	Referred by H.M. Inspector
Sanitary Conveniences - Not maintained in a clean condition	1	1

Part VIII of the Act - Outwork.-

The August List from a local Glove Factory contained names of nine outworkers. Two of these resided outside the Urban Area and the seven inside the district have all been visited and found satisfactory.

Common Lodging Houses. - There is only one registered and this is situated at 23, Bridgegate. Five visits were paid during the year and informal action was taken regarding inadequate washing facilities and various sanitary defects. These received attention during the year.

Smoke Abatement. - No complaints were received and no action taken.

Rodent Control. - A full maintenance treatment of the Council's sewers was carried out during the year.

The Council's Refuse Tip and Sewage Works were treated on four occasions, and four private premises received attention.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food & Drugs Act, 1938 - Ice-Cream. - Nine premises are registered for the sale of ice-cream. Six are registered as retailers only and three as manufacturer-retailers. Ten visits were made during the year.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops. - There are five cowsheds and eight retail distributors registered in the area.

Three producers sell their milk wholesale. Two producers retail their own milk, together with milk from outside the Council's area. Six retailers obtain their supplies from outside.

Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936. - Three of the above retailers are licensed to sell Pasteurised milk treated outside the area.

Meat. - A Veterinary Surgeon carried out the duties under the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924 up to 31st July, 1948. A grant was made towards his salary by the Ministry of Health.

On 1st August the work of meat inspection in the area was taken over by the Sanitary Inspector appointed during the year by the Council. This officer holds the special qualification required to carry out meat inspections.

Summary for the period 1st January, 1948 to 31st July, 1948.

	Number killed and inspected	Weight Condemned	
		Carcass Meat	Offal
Cattle	435	10,662 lbs.	
Calves	66	904 lbs.	
Sheep	1,348	485 lbs.	5,233 lbs.
Pigs	32	34 lbs.	

Also condemned 174 lbs. imported frozen beef.
73 lbs. canned corned beef.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

1st August, 1948 to 31st December, 1948.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	577	109	100	2,113	56
Number inspected	577	109	100	2,113	55
All diseases except Tuberculosis					
Whole carcasses condemned	5	12	3	21	2
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned		373	2	44	10
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis		56.8%	5%	2.8%	21.4%
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole Carcasses condemned	4	16	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		90	-	-	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis		16%	-	-	2%

The following table shows the number of casualty animals slaughtered and those received from collecting centres and also indicates those found totally unfit and condemned in each class.

Cattle - ex collecting centres -	559	- whole carcase & organs condemned	3
casualty	127	- "	34
Calves - ex collecting centres -	55	- "	-
casualty	45	- "	3
Sheep - ex collecting centres -	2,033	- "	-
casualty	80	- "	-
Pigs - ex collecting centres -	7	- "	21
casualty	49	- "	2

Slaughtering. - All slaughtering is centralized in one slaughterhouse and this is situated on the premises of Messrs. Thompson and Forster, Vero Road. Since my last report I am able to state that separate accommodation has now been provided for diseased carcasses so that these are not hung next to healthy ones. There are still, however, a number of improvements required, such as recommenting the yard. I understand that this latter work will be carried out in the course of time.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Number of Informal written notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal notices by order of Authority.	Number of nuisances abated after notice.

Dwelling houses:

Structural defects	34	5	21
Overcrowding	1	-	-
Lodging houses	1	-	-
Deposits of refuse & manure	1	-	1
Water closets	7	1	6
House drainage	20	1	16
Water supply	10	-	8
Dustbins	17	2	13
Totals	...	91	65

Precautions against Infectious Disease. - The number of houses disinfected after infectious disease was five.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	559
Population (Registrar General's estimated figure - mid-year 1948)	4,577
Number of inhabited houses	1,293
Rateable Value	£27,036
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£105:18: 3

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

		Total	Male	Female
<u>Live births</u>	Legitimate	74	39	35
	Illegitimate	5	2	3

Live birth rate - 17.3 per 1,000 of the population. Corresponding rate for England and Wales - 17.9, and for 148 smaller towns (resident populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census) - 19.2.

		Total	Male	Female
<u>Still births</u>	Legitimate	1	1	0
	Illegitimate	0	0	0

Still birth rate (per 1,000 of the population - 0.22. Corresponding rate for England and Wales - 0.42 and for 148 smaller towns - 0.43.

	Total	Male	Female
<u>Deaths</u>	65	32	33

Death rate (per 1,000 of the population) - 14.2.

For England and Wales - 10.8.
For 148 smaller towns - 10.7.

Deaths of Infants under one year. -

	Male	Female
Total	3	3
Legitimate	3	2
Illegitimate	0	1

Death rate of Infants under one year of age. -

All infants (per 1,000 live births)	34
England and Wales	32
148 smaller towns	75

Causes of Death.

	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	2	4
Other forms of Tuberculosis	-	1	1
Cancer (all types)	2	1	3
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	4	7	11
Heart Diseases	12	13	25
Bronchitis	-	1	1
Pneumonia	1	-	1
Other respiratory diseases	2	-	2
Nephritis	3	1	4
Premature birth	1	1	2
Other violent causes	1	-	1
All other causes	3	6	9
Other digestive diseases	1	-	1
	<u>52</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>65</u>

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

A total of one hundred and one notifications was received during the year.

Notifiable Diseases (confirmed) during the year.

	1945	1946	1947	1948
Scarlet Fever	11	7	2	27
Diphtheria	-	5	-	-
Measles	11	5	50	60
Whooping Cough	9	-	18	9
Anterior Poliomyelitis	1	-	1	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	1	1
Acute Primary Pneumonia	-	-	-	2
Erysipelas	-	-	-	1

Diphtheria. - One patient was sent to hospital as a suspected case, but the diagnosis was not subsequently confirmed.

Measles. - The greater number of cases occurred during the months of January, February and March.

Scarlet Fever. - With two exceptions all the cases of Scarlet Fever occurred at the Barnard Castle School for boys. The epidemic commenced in the month of January at a time when a number of cases of sore throat was prevalent and the main incidence occurred between the months of January and March. There was no evidence as to the source of infection being the milk supply to the school, and it seems likely that the original infection was brought into the school after the Christmas vacation by one of the boys. Spread of the infection occurred subsequently by direct contact. All the cases were of a mild or comparatively mild character and no complications ensued. All the cases were isolated in the School Sanatorium.

Analysis of the Total Cases (confirmed) in Age Groups.

	Under one year.	1 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	Age Unknown
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	1	24	1	-	1
Measles	2	8	17	24	7	-	-	2
Whooping Cough	1	3	2	3	-	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pneumonia	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Diphtheria Immunisation. - As a result of the coming into operation on 5th July of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the responsibility for the provision of facilities for diphtheria immunisation was taken over entirely by the County Council.

Facilities provided comprise, in this area, mainly the Welfare Centre for the immunisation of children aged under five years, and the private practitioners for children of any age. Payment of fees to practitioners will be made by the County Council under a scale not yet decided upon.

I hope that in addition to the above facilities, arrangements may be made in the future, with the approval of the County Education Committee, to continue to carry out immunisation of children at the schools when sufficient numbers are available to make this practicable.

Propaganda in the case of children under five years of age is sent through the post at eight and twelve months from the County Health Department. There are also frequent reminders given by the Health Visitor who visits the houses of the children concerned. Parents who attend at the school medical inspections are given advice and information on the subject by the assistant School Medical Officer.

Diphtheria Immunisation Return for the half-year ended 30th June, 1948.

Number of children who completed a full course of primary immunisation in the Authority's area in the six months ended 30th June, 1948.

	Age at date of final injection		Total under 15.
	0 - 4 yrs.	5 - 14 yrs.	
	39	1	40

Number given reinforcing injection - 4.

Diphtheria Immunisation Return for the Quarter ended 31st December, 1948.

Number of children who completed a full course of primary immunisation during the quarter ended 31st Dec., 1948 (from the County Medical Officers Quarterly Report).

	Age at date of final injection		Total under 15
	0 - 4 yrs.	5 - 14 yrs.	
	7	-	7

Number given reinforcing injection - 1.

Number of children who had completed a full course of Immunisation at any time up to 30th June, 1948:-

Age as at 31.12.48 i.e. born in year.

Under 1 1948	1 1947	2 1946	3 1945	4 1944	5 1943	6 1942	7 1941
-	35	36	41	45	22	40	39
8 1940	9 1939	10 1938	11 1937	12 1936	13 1935	14 1934	
35	41	32	38	25	29	34	

Estimated mid-year child population, 1948 Children under 5 Children 5 - 14 Total
364 655 1,019

Percentage of child population who have completed a full course of immunisation 43% 51%

Tuberculosis -
New Cases (Form A) and Mortality during 1948.

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1 to 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
5 to 15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 to 25	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 to 35	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 to 45	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
45 to 55	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
55 to 65	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 & upwards	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Totals	2	3	-	-	2	2	-	1

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Public Health Staff.— The Medical Officer of Health is a part-time officer. A grant is made to his salary by the Ministry of Health.

The Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector are whole-time officers. Part of their salaries are paid by the Urban District Council and portions by the Ministries of Health and Transport.

A County Health Visitor resides in the town and part of her time is allocated to the duties of County School Nurse.

Mr. Edgar Dixon was appointed by the Council during the year to the post of Sanitary Inspector, part of his duties comprising inspection of meat for the combined areas of Barnard Castle Rural and Urban Districts and Startforth Rural District. Mr. F. L. White reverted to the whole-time post of Surveyor to the Council.

Hospitals.— There are no special hospitals for Tuberculosis, Maternity or Children in the district.

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, control of the Infectious Diseases Hospitals formerly administered by the Auckland, Shildon and Willington Joint Hospital Board, was taken over by the South West Durham Hospital Management Committee. Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment are sent to one of those hospitals.

The Richardson Memorial Convalescent Home, which was taken over during the war under the Emergency Medical Services Hospitals Scheme, is now used as a Convalescent Holiday Home for patients from hospitals in the County of Durham, North Riding of Yorkshire and the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Ambulance Facilities.— Upon the coming into operation on the 5th July of the National Health Service Act, 1946, responsibility for the provision of ambulance facilities was taken over by the County Council.

One full-time ambulance was provided to serve the combined areas of Barnard Castle Urban District and Barnard Castle Rural District, excluding the civil parishes of Bolam, Etherley, Evenwood and Barony, Hamsterley and South Bedburn. These parishes are served by ambulances included in the Bishop Auckland area. The ambulance owned by the Middleton-in-Teesdale Ambulance Association is also available on an agency basis in the urban and rural districts.

Provision is also made in the development plan for the acquisition of one sitting case car for the area.

The Austin Motor Ambulance, formerly owned and operated by the Council, was taken over by the Durham County Council on 5th July.

For the period up to 5th July, the Council's Ambulance conveyed 121 cases and covered 5,520 miles, as follows:-

Residents of Barnard Castle	- 99 cases involving 4,384 miles
Non-residents	- 22 cases involving 1,136 miles.

Nursing Arrangements.— Under Section 25 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the provision of a Home Nursing Service became the responsibility of Local Health Authorities as from the 5th July, 1948. By an agreement concluded with the Durham County Nursing Association, the Durham County Council have delegated this aspect of their functions to the Association, which now operates under the general supervision of the County Medical Officer. This arrangement has necessitated the integration and co-ordination by the County Nursing Association of the services formerly provided by individual district nursing associations and the transfer of administration to the County Association.

The arrangements whereby the domiciliary midwifery service in certain areas of the County was provided on an agency basis by district nursing associations are continued under Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, with the County Nursing Association acting as the agent.

Both services are now available free of charge.

Services are provided for this area and for the Startforth district by two nurses resident in the town. General, midwifery and maternity cases are nursed.

There is a small Nursing Home at 32, Bede Road (Proprietress, Hilda Smurthwaite, S.R.N., S.C.M.) chiefly for maternity cases.

CLINIC AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

Fortnightly sessions of the Infant Welfare Clinic and weekly sessions of the School Clinic are held in the Trinity Methodist Schoolroom, Barnard Castle, under the County Council Scheme. Attendances at the School Clinic were small.

I am, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

J. G. PALEY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

